

To: Press[Press@epa.gov]
From: David Gray
Sent: Mon 8/24/2015 10:42:02 PM
Subject: CLOSED - AP

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From: Gray, David
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 4:42 PM
To: 'ffonseca@ap.org'
Subject: AP response

Fonseca,

Here is a response to your inquiry.

David

Has the EPA stopped delivering water to the Navajo Nation as the agency indicated it would last week? If not, what remains as far as water resources and where are those resources placed?

As agreed upon during conversations between EPA and the Navajo Nation, Friday Aug. 21 was the last day EPA made agricultural water available on the Navajo Nation. As of August 21, EPA had provided a total of 418,000 gallons of water for livestock and agriculture. EPA is currently working with federal and tribal partners to evaluate alternative methods of supporting water delivery. EPA continues to provide hay for livestock, and has delivered a total of 2,304 bales to date. EPA has also provided technical assistance to the Navajo Nation for irrigation ditch flushing, similar to the assistance provided in Colorado and Utah, and believe the irrigation ditch water is suitable for use.

The Navajo Nation said today it will not lift its advisory against using the river water for irrigation/livestock or drinking, despite testing that shows it is safe for irrigation. Does the EPA have an obligation to continue providing water or financial resources for water to the Navajo Nation indefinitely? Why or why not?

Based on EPA sampling data at Hogback, N.M, San Juan River water quality has returned to pre-event conditions. The City of Durango has resumed taking water from the Animas River for use in their drinking water system, the State of New Mexico has lifted restrictions on the use of the San Juan River for drinking water, and the State of Utah has lifted restrictions for using San Juan River water for irrigation and livestock watering. EPA and its federal partners continue to evaluate the need for resources and to engage the Navajo Nation.